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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

ATTACHMENT AMay Day Celebrations in Burma

1. May Day witnessed three independent celebration ceremonies in Burma under the auspices of the BCP-controlled People's Democratic Front (PDF), the BSP-controlled Trades Union Congress (Burma) (TUC(B)), and the labor organizations under the control of the CDL(BB). The celebrations staged by the TUC(B) and the CDL(BB) organizations, though held independently, were in harmony and representatives from the CDL(BB) organizations were present at the TUC(B) celebrations. There was no doubt, however, of the hostility between the TUC(B) and the PDF celebrations and in both cases the principal speaker made derogatory references to the other group.

TUC(B) Celebrations

2. Preparations for the TUC(B) celebrations in Rangoon were in the hands of a "May Day Celebrations Committee" formed by leading members of the TUC(B) with Thakin LWIN as its president. This Committee dispatched fraternal greetings to the WFTU, the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions of the Soviet Union, and the All China Federation of Labor. It also invited the WFTU to send representatives to the celebrations. This invitation the WFTU declined on the grounds that inadequate notice had been received, but a message of greetings was dispatched which, however, failed to arrive in time for the ceremony. This message read:

"We wish you every success in your May Day celebrations and also that May Day 1951 will see more settled and happy conditions in your country."

The message was signed: "Yours fraternally, S. Rostovsky, Secretary, WFTU."

3. Advance publicity was given to the celebrations in an official statement by the TUC(B) on 27 April which gave notice of the proposal to pass a resolution on May Day calling for affiliation of the TUC(B) to the WFTU and made a point of explaining that the TUC(B) was "not a Socialist organization" despite the fact that its president, vice-president, and secretary were prominent members of the Burma Socialist Party.
4. On May Day a mass rally was staged in the morning in the center of Rangoon which is said to have been attended by 10,000 workers. Large portraits were on display of Lenin, Stalin, MAO Tse-tung, Marx and Engels and a "mock up" had been erected, which was referred to as the "worker's memorial" which appeared to be a small-scale reproduction of the Lenin tomb in Moscow. Four resolutions were passed in the course of the meeting:
 - a) Calling for the restoration of peace in Burma.
 - b) Urging that the TUC(B) should affiliate and work together with the WFTU. The text of this resolution included a derogatory reference to the ICFTU.
 - c) Condemning the "war-mongering imperialists" who were destroying world peace and resolving to wipe them out in order to prevent a third world war.
 - d) Condemning Burma Oil Co. and other oil companies for their intrigues against the Union Government and the workers, and resolving to launch a campaign against them in conjunction with the country's masses.

The resolution urging affiliation with the WFTU was proposed by Ko MYO NYUNT, Joint-Secretary of the TUC(B) and President of the Burma Army Ordnance Depot Employees Association.

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5. The principal speech was made by Thakin LWIN, President of the TUC(B). The main points in his speech were:
- a) The responsibility of capitalism for the sufferings of the masses.
 - b) That the world was split into two camps led by Soviet Russia and the Anglo-Americans respectively, the former being the representatives of the peasants and workers and the latter the representatives of the capitalists and land-lords.
 - c) The split in the WFTU because of the intrigue of the reactionary rightist bloc.
 - d) The formation of the World Peace Committee; the "main tasks" of the world's workers were to prevent the occurrence of a third world war and to defeat the machinations of the capitalists who were responsible for the second world war.
 - e) An attack on the Burma Oil Co. and foreign capital which was interfering in Burma's affairs.
 - f) The degrading of "the noble world revolution" by the deviationists--the so-called Communist Parties of Burma.
 - g) The failure of the Burma Government to put into effect the constitution for creating a Socialist state (though the Government was admittedly facing many difficulties) and in particular the failure of the Government to protect the interests of the workers.
 - h) The Government's failure to follow their declared foreign policy (of neutrality) and its failure to establish relations with Soviet Russia and the Democratic countries.
 - i) That the Government should maintain relations of closest friendship with the Peoples Democratic countries instead of maintaining relations with the intriguing and hypocritical reactionaries.
6. In the evening there was a further rally at which a theatrical entertainment was staged, consisting of a number of short sketches and musical items plugging the Communist theme.

CDL(BB) Celebrations

7. The meeting arranged by the labor organizations of the CDL(BB) was on a considerably smaller scale and was attended by some 500 Chinese workers. A pamphlet issued by the preparatory committee for the occasion emphasized the leading role of the world's workers and urged all Chinese workers in Burma to cooperate with the Burmese working classes in smashing imperialism and capitalism. Mr. Jessup and Mr. Malcolm MacDonald were alleged to have visited Burma in a campaign to oppress the working classes of SEA and to plan against the Chinese People's Republic. All Chinese workers and well-to-do Chinese were called upon to cooperate whole-heartedly in the national rehabilitation and reconstruction taking place in China.

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8. In the course of the meeting the TUC(B) resolution to affiliate with the WFTU was greeted with "joyous acclamation" and much encouragement was found in the TUC(B)'s message of fraternal greetings to the ACFL. As a reciprocal gesture of goodwill and friendship for the Burmese working class the meeting passed a resolution condemning the Burma Oil Co. for the suppression of its employees.

PDF Celebrations

9. Such information as is available on the PDF May Day celebrations is taken from various PDF broadcasts on the subject. In preparation for the day directives are stated to have been issued to all branches by the Central Organization Committee of the PDF, by the BCP, and by the Burma Workers' Union, to celebrate May Day throughout the "liberated areas" in conjunction with the PDF. A May Day Manifesto broadcast on 27 April in the name of the Central Committee of the PDF refers to the success of the workers' revolutions in the Soviet-led New Democratic States and in China and develops the theme of the all important role of the workers in the struggle for peace. The seizure of Burma by the masses is interpreted as a positive step which would prevent its use by the expansionists as a military base and the Thakin NU Government is, as usual, presented as an Anglo-American stooge. The Manifesto concludes: "Now the WFTU with a membership of 70 million workers of the world, is going into the struggle for 'perpetual peace'. Join hands with the international workers and participate in this struggle for 'perpetual peace'. For 'perpetual peace' fight against and crush the Fascist forces of MAUNG NU; for 'perpetual peace' form blood ties with the workers of the world." A further manifesto issued by the headquarters of the Burma Workers' Union follows a very similar line and in addition to the struggles in China and Vietnam, refers to the revolutionary movements in India, Malaya, Indonesia and Thailand, which are taking up arms against "their Anglo-American satellite Governments."
10. The celebrations are said to have been attended by large numbers representing the PDF, the BCP, the Burma Workers' Union, the All Burma Peasants' Union, the All Burma Students' Union, the (underground) Federation of Services Organization, the Communist Youth League, the Women's Congress and the armed forces. At seven o'clock in the morning there appears to have been a military parade which paid "due respects" to fallen comrades. This was followed by a speech by Thakin THAN TUN.
11. Thakin THAN TUN explained that May Day celebrations were being staged all over the world and traced the history and origin of May Day. The Thakin NU Government, he said, would also be staging celebrations but these were designed to present a show of strength to the working classes who were in reality being severely oppressed. He went on to castigate the reactionary PVC leaders and to call for a special effort on behalf of the PDF which would shortly launch an offensive; great courage and fortitude would be needed. The example of the Chinese Communists who effected a successful invasion of Hainan in ordinary sailing boats despite the bombing and machine-gunning of KMT aircraft was one to be emulated. The theme of the whole meeting was expressed in the slogan for the day which was: "All-out efforts for the successful prosecution of the war."

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